

Proclamation 7222 of September 16, 1999

Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1999

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

The Constitution is perhaps our Nation's most cherished document, the compass that has helped us chart America's course toward freedom, human dignity, and democracy for more than 200 years. Its text, born of the genius and idealism of our Founders and hammered out through hard effort and compromise by the delegates to the Constitutional Convention, established a system of government capable of responding to the pressures of social and political change. It created a sacred covenant that continues to bind all our citizens by a set of principles based on the ideals of equality, inclusion, and independence and by a delicate balance of powers, rights, and responsibilities among citizens and their State and Federal Governments. Today, sustained by the efforts and sacrifices of generations of Americans, the U.S. Constitution remains as strong and vibrant a charter of freedom as it was at the time of its signing 212 years ago.

The 20th century has witnessed a great wave of migration of men and women to our Nation from all parts of the globe, attracted by the freedom, justice, and rule of law guaranteed by our Constitution. As they assume the responsibilities of American citizenship, they infuse our political process with fresh perspectives and enthusiasm and prove to the world that a diverse people can live in peace and progress. Today we are a Nation with new hopes, new dreams, and new people, but we are united by a devotion to the same democratic ideals that have guided us for over 200 years.

As we reflect upon America's past, we recognize that our country is still in the act of becoming the "more perfect union" envisioned by our Founders. Every generation of Americans has struggled to live up to our Nation's promise, working to overcome forces of fear or ignorance or prejudice that would seek to deny the rights of others because of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. The 21st century may bring new challenges to the rights and liberties of American citizens, but we can be confident that the Constitution will still light a clear and shining path of freedom and justice into the future.

During Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, let us recognize the great efforts not only of our leaders, but also of ordinary Americans who labor daily to uphold and strengthen the ideals embodied in our Constitution. Whether citizens by birth or choice, we share the blessings guaranteed to us by the Constitution and the responsibility of ensuring that those blessings are extended to all our people equally.

In commemoration of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the importance of active, responsible citizenship in preserving the Constitution's blessings for our Nation, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (U.S.C. 159), requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 1999, as Citizenship Day and September 17 through September 23, 1999, as Constitution Week. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, educational, and religious organizations, to conduct meaningful ceremonies and programs in our schools, houses of worship, and other community centers to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the Constitution and the rights and duties of citizenship. I also call on all citizens to rededicate themselves to the principles of the Constitution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7223 of September 17, 1999

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Ovarian cancer is a devastating disease that takes the lives of thousands of women in our Nation each year. Since 1985, there has been a dramatic increase in the incidence of ovarian cancer, with a 30 percent increase in the number of women diagnosed with the disease and an 18 percent increase in the number of fatalities. Ovarian cancer is particularly deadly, killing nearly 15,000 women each year. It is often not diagnosed until the cancer is in the late stages of development, limiting the effectiveness of treatment and reducing the chances of survival. In its late stages, the chances of survival from ovarian cancer are just 25 percent; when it is detected early, before the cancer spreads, the survival rate exceeds 90 percent.

Our most effective weapon in the battle against ovarian cancer is early detection. Subtle but recognizable symptoms, such as bloating, vague abdominal pain and discomfort, gastrointestinal problems, back pain, and fatigue can also be symptoms of other less serious illnesses, but women who are experiencing such early warning signs should consult their doctors immediately for appropriate tests.

Doctors and researchers have identified factors that put women at higher risk of developing ovarian cancer, including a family history of breast and ovarian cancer, a high fat diet, never having had children, or infertility. It is vital that women learn about risk factors and visit their doctors regularly.

As we observe Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week, let us build on our efforts to eradicate this serious disease and urge all American women and their families to learn more about ovarian cancer, its symptoms, and available methods that may reduce the risk of developing it. By increasing awareness of early warning signs and risk factors, maintaining a healthy diet, and consulting regularly with health care professionals, women across America can lead healthier and longer lives and help our Nation win the fight against ovarian cancer.